Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify personal factors associated with drugs use and the practice of physical activity in a college student population in northwest Spain. A cross-sectional survey was conducted between January and April 2010 using a self-administered questionnaire including questions concerning gender, age, course and year of study, living arrangements and work. Participants were asked also about current tobacco use, alcohol drinking and heavy episodic drinking, illegal drugs use, and frequency of physical activity. Prevalences were calculated and bivariate and multivariate logistic regression analyses were conducted to calculate separate models for the different habits making adjustments for the demographic variables. Most of students consumed alcohol (78.3%), with 31.7% consuming tobacco and 34% having used illegal drugs at some point. The prevalence of sufficient physical activity was about 22.7% and it was clearly lower in women and in courses no linked with sports. Women have been lesser consumers of illegal drugs and alcohol. However, heavy episodic drinking is clearly associated with women. Living with friends was noticed as a risk factor, both for tobacco use and the consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs, when compared with living at home. Courses of study connected with sport, health and education showed a lower prevalence of drug uses than the other courses analysed. Since distribution of drug use and insufficient physical activity depending on gender, living arrangement and the course of study, it would be appropriate to design more efficient interventions of health promotion take these differences into account.

Keywords
College students, physical activity, unhealthy habits, gender, living situation.